

REMARKS

Claims 2-12, 14-17, 19-22, 28-41, 43-45 and 47-49 are pending. Claims 1, 13, 18, 23-27, 42, 46 and 50-53 have been canceled. Claims 2, 3, 8-12, 14-17, 19-22, 28, 29, 35-41, 43-45 and 47-49 have been amended. No new matter has been added.

Claims 13 and 42 are rejected under 35 USC 112, first paragraph, as containing subject matter which is not described in the specification. This rejection is respectfully overcome in view of the foregoing claim amendments.

Claims 1-11, 13-23, 25, 27-39, 41-50 and 52 are rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by Sheppard, U.S. Patent 6,026,397. Claims 12, 24, 26, 40, 51 and 53 are rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Sheppard, in view of Abecassis, U.S. Patent 5,717,814.


Claims 19-21 and 47-49 have been rewritten in independent form. All other pending claims now depend, at least indirectly, from one of these allowable claims. Accordingly, all prior art rejections have been overcome. Accordingly, Applicant requests that they be withdrawn.

In view of the above, each of the presently pending claims in this application is believed to be in immediate condition for allowance. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to withdraw the outstanding rejection of the claims and to pass this application to issue. If it is determined that a telephone conference would expedite the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the number given below.

In the event the U.S. Patent and Trademark office determines that an extension and/or other relief is required, applicant petitions for any required relief including extensions of time and authorizes the Commissioner to charge the cost of such petitions and/or other fees due in connection with the filing of this document to Deposit Account No. 03-1952 referencing docket no. 455392001200.

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Respectfully submitted,

By 

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